

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 083119
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-01 /122 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/EGY :D E ZWEIFEL:MM
APPROVED BY NEA/EGY:D O NEWBERRY
NEA/IAI:C HILL
NEA/P:R UNDELAND
NEA:N A VELIOTES
L/NEA:D SMALL (INFO)

-----065232 311944Z /47

P 311909Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, PBOR, EG, US, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PETROLEUM PRODUCTION FROM ALMA FIELD

1. NEW YORK TIMES CARRIED ARTICLE (DATELINED JERUSALEM 3/29)
ON START-UP OF PRODUCTION FROM ALMA FIELD IN GULF OF SUEZ.
COPIES OF ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO TEL AVIV AND CAIRO.

2. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR MARCH 30 NOON
BRIEFING, BUT ISSUE DID NOT COME UP. POSTS MAY DRAW ON
THIS GUIDANCE IN RESPONDING TO MEDIA INQUIRIES OR IN DIS-
CUSSION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

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PAGE 02 STATE 083119

3. BEGIN TEXT :

Q. WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE ISRAELI'S
PUTTING INTO OPERATION OIL WELLS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ OFF
OF EL TUR?

A. THE USG REGRETS THAT ISRAEL HAS TAKEN THIS STEP. OUR POSITION IS WELL KNOWN TO ALL OF THE CONCERNED PARTIES.

Q. HAS THE U.S. EXPRESSED ITS VIEWS RECENTLY TO THE ISRAELIS? WHAT HAS THE ISRAELI RESPONSE BEEN?

A. YES. WE REQUESTED THAT THE GOI RECONSIDER THE DECISION TO MOVE TO PRODUCTION FROM THIS NEW FIELD. THE GOI HAS NOT RESPONDED TO OUR REQUEST.

Q. WHAT HAVE WE TOLD THE AMERICAN OIL COMPANIES THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION?

A. WE HAVE INFORMED OFFICIALS OF THE NEPTUNE COMPANY OF OUR VIEWS ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ISSUES AND THAT MOVING TO PRODUCTION WOULD BE ILL ADVISED.

(IF ASKED: ABOUT U.S. LEGAL POSITION.) THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPLOITATION OF NEW OIL FIELDS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES IS UNPRECEDENTED AND GOES BEYOND THE LEGAL AUTHORITY OF A BELLIGERENT OCCUPANT. FURTHER, EVEN PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED MINERAL RESOURCES OF OCCUPIED TERRITORY CANNOT BE USED FOR PURPOSES BEYOND THE NEEDS OF THE OCCUPATION.

Q. WHO OWNS NEPTUNE?

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PAGE 03 STATE 083119

A. A TEXAS COMPANY, MONCRIEF OIL INTERESTS, IS A PART OWNER. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT OTHER U.S. FIRMS OR INDIVIDUALS ARE THE OTHER OWNERS.

Q. HOW MUCH OIL IS BEING PRODUCED AT THIS NEW FIELD?

A. WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT 10,000 BARRELS PER DAY IS THE PRESENT PRODUCTION RATE.

Q. WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT?

A. THIS IS A QUESTION FOR THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT TO ANSWER. HOWEVER, WE DO KNOW THAT THEY ARE CONCERNED.

Q. DO YOU THINK THIS STEP WILL COMPLICATE NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL?

A. ANY NEW CONTENTIOUS ISSUE BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES WOULD BE UNHELPFUL IN THIS RESPECT. END TEXT.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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TAGS: ENRG, PBOR, EG, US, IS
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